

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03

NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 OIC-04

NEA-11 FEA-02 DRC-01 INT-08 /162 W

----- 091925

R 252049Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7435

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ILO, ELAB, UK, ETUC

SUBJECT: A BRITISH PARTICIPANT DISCUSSES GENEVA

TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

REF: (A) GENEVA 0371; (B) STATE 238939 (1973);

(C) LONDON 0790; (D) LONDON 10329 (1973)

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1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CYRIL PLANT, A MEMBER OF THE TUC

GENERAL COUNCIL AND A WORKER MEMBER OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY, TOLD US THAT THE BRITISH TUC WAS "VERY, VERY SATISFIED" WITH THE RESULTS OF THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, JANUARY 19TH, IN GENEVA. END SUMMARY

2. PLANT TOLD THE EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE THAT THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE JANUARY 19TH MEETING WAS VERY AMIABLE BECAUSE EVERYTHING HAD BEEN WORKED OUT IN ADVANCE DURING PRIVATE MEETINGS (REF A). HE NOTED THAT THE "RUSSIANS (ESPECIALLY SHELEPIN, LEADER OF THE SOVIET AUCCTU) WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO BE NICE FELLOWS." FOR EXAMPLE, ALTHOUGH THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES MADE IT CLEAR IN THE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS THAT THEY WANTED THE CONFERENCE TO ESTABLISH SOME FORM OF PERMANENT MACHINERY TO COORDINATE FUTURE MEETINGS, THEY DID NOT PRESS THEIR VIEWS IN THE PLENARY SESSION. PLANT BELIEVES THAT THE SOVIETS, LIKE THE BRITISH, WHO SHARED THE SOVIET VIEW, REALIZED THAT IT WAS AN ISSUE WHICH COULD HAVE SPLIT THE MEETING INTO TWO. PLANT ADDED THAT NOT ONLY DID THE GERMAN DGB STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS NOTION, BUT SO DID AUSTRIANS, DUTCH, BELGIANS AND ITALIANS. NON-SOVIET BLOC TRADE UNIONS WHO FAVORED THE IDEA INCLUDED THE NORWEGIANS AND THE FINNS.

3. IN PLANT'S OPINION, THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES' CAUTIOUS BUT COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE WAS BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WISH TO JEOPARDIZE AGREEMENT BY THE PARTICIPANTS TO A SECOND CONFERENCE (REF A). IN THE EVENT, THE GENEVA MEETING RECOMMENDED A SECOND CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS "ON THE HUMANIZATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT" TO BE HELD "IF POSSIBLE" ABOUT THE END OF 1974 (AND TO BE PREPARED BY THE FOUR EUROPEAN WORKER MEMBERS OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY.) THE TUC LEADER IS CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES WILL USE THIS OSTENSIBLY TECHNICAL CONFERENCE FOR "POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION" PURPOSES AND AS ANOTHER STEP IN THEIR LONG TERM GOAL OF MERGING THE ICFTU AND THE WFTU. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT AS A STEP IN THE SOVIET DRIVE TO "POLITICIZE" FUTURE MEETINGS, THE LATTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WILL PRESS TO HAVE INCLUDED THE THEME OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN FUTURE CONFERENCES.

4. ACCORDING TO PLANT, IT WAS NOT DECIDED AT GENEVA AS TO WHETHER THE NEXT CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD WITHIN THE "FRAMEWORK OF THE ILO." THREE POSSIBLE SITES FOR IT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED: GENEVA, VIENNA, AND HELSINKI. THE BRITISH TUC PREFERS A SECOND CONFERENCE OUTSIDE

OF THE ILO CONTEXT AS DOES THE SOVIET BLOC, SO THEREFORE
WOULD FAVOR VIENNA OR HELSINKI. PLANT PERSONALLY
DISAGREES WITH BRITISH CONCEPT, PREFERRING GENEVA AS
A SITE. (PLANT CHIDED THE US (REF B) FOR RAISING
QUESTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF ILO FACILITIES FOR THE
JANUARY 19TH MEETING BECAUSE, HE SAID, THIS STRENGTHENS
THE HAND OF THOSE WHO WISH TO SEPARATE THESE CONFEREN-
CES FROM THEIR ILO BASE.)

5. AS FOR THE GERMAN INITIATIVE TO DEAL WITH THE ARAB
EMBARGO (REF C), PLANT CLAIMS THAT THE GERMANS DID NOT
PRESS THE ISSUE IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SESSIONS. (THERE
WAS SOME GENERAL, SOMEWHAT RANDOM DISCUSSION ABOUT THE

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OIL SITUATION, HOWEVER, AND HE NOTED THAT EVEN SHELEPIN,
SPEAKING TO SOME BRITISH TRADE UNIONISTS, COMPLAINED
ABOUT THE HIGH PRICE THE USSR HAS TO PAY FOR ARAB OIL.)

6. COMMENT: A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH ALLEN HARGREAVES'
HEAD OF THE TUC INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CONFIRMS
PLANT'S DESCRIPTION OF TUC SATISFACTION WITH THE
CONFERENCE. THIS SATISFACTION IS UNDOUBTEDLY QUITE
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GENUINE, FOR VIEWED IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF TUC'S INTER-
NATIONAL GOALS, AS REFLECTED IN ITS CALL FOR WORLD
TRADE UNION UNITY, ISSUED AT THE BLACKPOOL CONGRESS
IN SEPTEMBER (REF D), THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS A
MAJOR STEP IN THAT DIRECTION. INCREASINGLY, COMMON
ANGLO-SOVIET TRADE UNION GOALS, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT
TERM, ARE EMERGING. THIS IS DUE, INTER ALIA, TO THE
DOMINANCE OF JACK JONES, THE LEFT-WING CHAIRMAN OF
THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, BUT IT IS ALSO DUE,
IN PART, TO THE FACT THAT -- AS IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS --
TUC MODERATES HAVE NOT "STOOD UP TO BE COUNTED" ON
INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. IN ADDITION, THEY ARE PREOCCU-
PIED WITH THEIR OWN UNION PROBLEMS. MOREOVER, THE
TUC GENERAL SECRETARY, WHATEVER IDEAS OF HIS OWN HE
MAY DEVELOP LATER, APPEARS TO CONSIDER HIS CURRENT
ROLE AS CARRYING OUT ALREADY-MANDATED TUC POLICIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EAST WEST MEETINGS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR OBJECTIVES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON01195
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740116/aaaaaajk.tel
Line Count: 208
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) GENEVA 0371; (B) STATE 238939 (1, 973);
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Jul-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <12 APR 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: A BRITISH PARTICIPANT DISCUSSES GENEVA TRADE UNION CONFERENCE
TAGS: ELAB, UK, XG, ILO, ETUC, (PLANT, CYRIL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005